

## Book Review

**Saving the Tropical Forests.** 1988. Judith Gradwohl and Russell Greenberg. Island Press, 1718 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 214 p. Hard cover \$24.95.

*Saving the Tropical Forests* by Judith Gradwohl and Russell Greenberg was published by Island Press in conjunction with the Smithsonian Institution's traveling exhibition "Tropical Rainforests: A Disappearing Treasure." This exhibit will appear in 14 North American cities during a five year period. Gradwohl is curator of the traveling exhibition and Greenberg is a research biologist at the National Zoological Park. Both have spent extensive time researching in the American tropics.

The book opens with a discussion of the Specter of Deforestation, wherein the authors explain the effects of deforestation and the reasons and forces behind the removal of 1% of the tropical forests each year. The combined effects of the demand for agricultural products, colonization of the forest frontier, the servicing of extremely large foreign debts, war and wildfires and population growth are discussed. The results of such deforestation are detailed in this portion of the book. Tragic consequences such as extinction of large numbers

of species, increased exposure and erosion of soil, increase global warming, decreases in rainfall resulting in desertification, and loss of people and cultures endemic to the forests are identified as results of deforestation.

Part II of the book details many solutions that have been effective as local projects. Entitled "The Case Studies", the authors describe approaches such as the establishment of forest reserves, sustainable agriculture, natural forest management and tropical forest restoration. In each of the four categories, numerous case studies are discussed.

As the authors state, every minute 50 to 100 acres of rich tropical rain forest disappear from the earth. Such despoilment must be abated. This book, together with the Smithsonian's traveling exhibition, will certainly contribute to the understanding of the problem and may prove to be instrumental in publicizing some solutions.

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